

The Library Assistant:

The Official Organ of the Library Assistants' Association.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS.

MAY MEETING.

By kind invitation of Mr. W. J. Harris, the Borough Librarian, the May Meeting will be held at the BROMLEY, KENT, CENTRAL PUBLIC LIBRARY. As the date originally fixed falls in the week of the Library Association Examination, the Meeting has been altered to MAY 15th.

The following are the arrangements:—

- 3.30 **QUEEN'S MEAD CRICKET GROUND, SHORTLANDS:** The Annual L.A.A. Cricket Match, "Library Assistants North of the Thames versus Library Assistants South of the Thames." Shortlands is a pretty little village-like place one station before Bromley South is reached. We hope a large number will appear to witness the prowess of the players.

A charming walk from Shortlands leads to Bromley Central Library, where at

- 6.30 **TEA** will be served in the Library Orchard.

We believe a library that can boast of an orchard is a novelty sufficiently attractive to make comment superfluous. After tea members may amuse themselves in the pleasure gardens at the back of the Library, or examine the Library itself which for economy and convenience in planning and administrative interest is far above the average.

- 7.30 **Business Meeting** in the Lecture Room of the Library. The Chair will be taken by Peter Harper, Esq., Chairman of the Public Libraries Committee, and the following papers will be read and discussed:—

"A Public Library Book Extension Service." Stanley J. Redgrave, Croydon Central Reference Library;

"Branch Libraries versus Delivery Stations."

1. "Branch Libraries." H. G. Sureties, Librarian, Shepherd's Hill Branch, Hornsey.
2. "Delivery Stations." W. C. Berwick Sayers, Sub-Librarian, Croydon Public Libraries.

Routes.—Frequent trains (S.E. and C. Rly.) from Victoria, Holborn, and St. Paul's to Bromley South. Charing Cross, Cannon Street, Waterloo Junction, and London Bridge (S.E. and C. Rly.); or from Liverpool Street via New Cross (S.E. and C. Rly.) to Bromley North. Best route: Bromley South, leaving the train at Shortlands for the Cricket Match. Bromley North and Bickley Stations are also in the Borough. Train service: To Bromley South and Shortlands—From Victoria, 2.20; Holborn, 2.15; St. Paul's, 2.17. To Bromley North; Cannon Street, 2.37; London Bridge, 2.40. Bromley North Station is about 10 minutes from the Cricket Mead.

Members who do not care to attend the Cricket Match are recommended to train down in the afternoon to Bromley, whence short walking or riding excursions can be made to Chislehurst Caves, or Keston Lakes and Common; or the beautiful gardens within the town itself, especially

those of Bromley Palace. We have emphasised our notice of this meeting because Mr. Harris is making special efforts to welcome us; and Bromley itself is one of the most beautiful spots in Kent, the Garden of England, and will be seen at its best on a mid-May afternoon. Ladies are specially invited.

At this meeting two members will be elected to audit the accounts of the Association for 1906-7. Nominations to be handed to the Hon. Sec. before the Business Meeting.

ANNUAL ELECTION OF COMMITTEE AND OFFICERS.

Nominations for election to the Offices and Committee of the Association must be received by the Hon. Secretary not later than May 12th. Ballot papers will accompany the June issue of "The Library Assistant."

APRIL MEETING.

By the kind invitation of Mr. F. J. Burgoyne (Borough Librarian) a meeting of the Association was held at the Herne Hill Branch of the Lambeth Public Libraries on Wednesday evening, April 10th. There was a large attendance, and much interest was displayed in the arrangement and equipment of the various departments of this new and excellently-planned Library.

Mr. Councillor Townesend (a member of the Lambeth Public Libraries Committee) had thoughtfully provided light refreshments which were handed round before the business of the evening commenced. Mr. Townesend also presided throughout the evening and he was supported by other members of the Libraries Committee, and by Mr. Burgoyne.

The first business was the election of a member to fill a vacancy on the Committee, caused by the resignation of Mr. Roebuck consequent upon his appointment to Walthamstow. There were three nominations: Messrs. T. Green (Shoreditch), J. D. Stewart (Islington) and G. White (Fulham). The result of the voting was that Mr. Stewart was declared elected.

Mr. Sidney Kirby (Hornsey Public Libraries) read a paper entitled "Co-operation: a suggestion." He said that co-operation was the natural outcome of a desire to progress and improve. Much had been done in conjunction with educational authorities and local institutions, but between library districts the movement was still in its infancy. This was not entirely the fault of library authorities inasmuch as they were restricted in some directions by the Acts, but he was not aware that librarians were prepared with any scheme, whatever powers might be granted them. Some definite proposals, accepted by the profession generally as sound and workable,

could hardly fail to bring about a re-adjustment of the Acts. It was a recognised fact that there were many books published which quite a large number of libraries could not afford to purchase. The most important step towards co-operation yet advocated was that each library should specialise in some particular subject, and, in connection with this, it was urged that by a system of interchanging books libraries would not only have at their command an immense collection of books but would economise. In order, however, that this might be entirely successful it would be necessary for each library to possess a complete set of the catalogues of other libraries. Moreover the work of searching these catalogues for books, and the time occupied, would be considerable. He suggested that a better plan would be to have a few large "store" or "central" libraries in different parts of the country which would provide the class of books he had described. These central bureaux would have no direct dealing with the public: the books would be borrowed by library authorities only, and through them they would reach the public. The store should be provided with complete author, title, and classified catalogues, in card and sheaf form; classified because only trained assistants would use them, and in card or sheaf form in order that they might be kept up-to-date. The London store might be made the centre for the cataloguing and classification of all books, printed cards being sold to those libraries which cared to apply for them, as in the United States. The cost of these central depots might be defrayed by the State, or, as an alternative, by a levy upon each library in proportion to the income.

Discussion.

Mr. Stewart said Mr. Hopwood had referred to the difficulty of defining the field of technical literature. The whole question resolved itself into the best way of mapping out that literature among the various libraries. Those present were chiefly concerned with the ordinary public library. Here the chief difficulties were cost, and keeping the collection up-to-date. In London they had the British Museum and the Patent Office Library to which readers could always be referred, but how was the obstacle to be overcome in the provinces? Mr. Hopwood had spoken of the advantages of being able to tell readers where special collections were to be found. This was quite feasible, but to be able to tell a reader where a particular book might be found was practically impossible. With regard to a central deposit collection the main question was: Should it be a Government library supported by Government funds, or should it be maintained by each library contributing its share?

He should like to hear some scheme outlined whereby the provincial reader could be helped.

Mr. Young thought the matter was in a nebulous condition and the solution a long way off. So far as the provinces were concerned the only way was to have a central information bureau. After ascertaining exactly what the reader wanted the bureau would be communicated with, and would send to the local library the best books on the subject. They had heard much of the troubles of inventors, but it was the duty of inventors to help themselves. An architect, for instance, should be able to obtain from his Association the books he required.

Mr. Peddie, in the course of some remarks, said that public libraries should have as many of the indexes and bibliographies of technical literature as possible. There were books of reference and books to read, and they must decide between these before they could deal as a whole with the question raised.

Mr. Thorne said that in considering the question of co-operation they were apt to fly away after ideal schemes and to overlook the means already at their disposal. The waste of opportunities among the libraries of London, and even among the libraries of single boroughs, was almost incredible. There was no reason why the libraries in one district should not co-operate with those in the adjoining districts. This was done by Poplar and Stepney in the matter of books for blind readers.

Mr. Prideaux thought that a central deposit library such as had been suggested should concern itself chiefly with periodical literature, transactions, parliamentary publications, etc., which the ordinary public library could not be expected to store. Such publications often contained most valuable technical information. He thought the libraries of the various Societies were always anxious to do their best to help provincial members by sending their books to them. The text-book difficulty was chronic in every library. Text-books were nearly always out-of-date almost as soon as published, and must be supplemented by periodical literature. With regard to specialising by public libraries, it certainly was hard on the general reader that money should be spent on expensive technical books.

Mr. Hogg said they had listened to two good papers but little had been said as to ways and means. When the present limitation of the library rate had been removed, and when county libraries had been established under the County Councils, they might do something by way of providing special libraries.

Mr. Sayers proposed a vote of thanks to the readers of the papers. The papers were both interesting and had the advantage of being co-ordinate. If every library specialised in some subject, when the millennium of an unlimited rate arrived these books could be transferred to the deposit or reservoir library. It was a waste of money for libraries to go on duplicating books as at present. Why not have interchangeable tickets? In London a union-catalogue was badly wanted, and it was quite possible to find a method of making such a catalogue, but its cost—nearly half-a-million—kept it outside practical politics.

Mr. Smith seconded the vote of thanks and Messrs. Kirby and Hopwood briefly replied. Mr. Hopwood said that the purpose of his paper had been to show that existing reference libraries were interested in the creation of a central store equally with the municipal libraries. He did not see how the man living away from civilization could be helped—the means of selecting books must always be more perfect at the library than they could be miles away from it.

Mr. Thorne proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Councillor Townesend for presiding and to Mr. Burgoyne for his invitation to Herne Hill. Mr. Hogg seconded.

Councillor Townesend in replying said he had had an instructive evening. The views to which they had listened might be somewhat utopian but it was well to have high ideals.

Mr. Burgoyne also replied expressing the pleasure the visit had afforded him, and the meeting then terminated.

AN AFTERNOON AT WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

On the 24th April some fifty members spent a most delightful afternoon at Westminster Abbey, where under the guidance of the Precentor (the Rev. H. G. Daniell-Bainbridge, M.A.) they visited some of the chief places of interest, including several not open to the general public. From the old Norman cloisters to the Abbots' dining hall, now used by the schoolboys for a similar purpose, the party passed, the Precentor explaining many things by the way. His knowledge of the history and antiquities of the Abbey which he so readily places at the disposal of those with whom he is brought into contact, made the visit most enjoyable and instructive, and those who were privileged to be numbered among the party will retain many pleasing recollections of this personally conducted tour round the noble and sacred edifice.

A few remarks from the Hon. Secretary voicing the thanks of those present to the Rev. Precentor for the trouble he had taken brought the visit to an end.

TECHNICAL LIBRARIES.*

By HENRY VAUX HOPWOOD, Assistant Librarian,
Patent Office Library.

I do not propose to-night to give a description of existing technical libraries. The more important are the property of the Societies, open only to members, while the question with which we are concerned is that of the supply of technological information to the public.

Mr. Kirby has laid before you a plan whereby a vast amount of literature may be placed at the disposal of the public through the agency of the public libraries. I wish to take technological literature as my text, the needs of technological readers as a criterion, and to ask you to discuss my ideal of what the facilities for technological reference and reading should be. In that ideal a place may be found for all existing organisations, the so-called "reference" library will have its function no less than the public one.

In the first place, let us consider what the term technology really implies. Various classifications allot to it different boundaries. The best definition appears to me to be that which defines patentable matter, "any method of manufacture." But we must remember that science is the origin, and art and commerce the complements, of technology. Thus we must become frankly utilitarian; we as librarians have to help the man who is going to make something, who is going to make that making pay. In order to find out what we are to supply, before we consider how we are to supply it, let us consider our readers and their requirements.

First, the student, that is, the individual undergoing a regular course of instruction. So far as this student is in the elementary or even the advanced stage as defined by South Kensington, his wants are easily met. His requirements are laid down by syllabus, his time is fully occupied in working through the prescribed course. His reading is far better performed at home than under our roof, all he asks, save in the most exceptional circumstances, is to possess the desired text-book in order to assimilate its contents at leisure. All we have to do is to provide the regulation text-books for his use, and bid him depart and study in peace. For the moment I will pass over the higher type of student; he is not following an absolutely fixed syllabus, he has to know his subject, and his work lies often over the boundary and becomes true research.

* A paper read at the April meeting of the Library Assistants' Association.

The first type with which the public library comes in contact in the true sense, that of assisting as distinguished from making a mere loan, is the practical and popular man, the man who is a stranger to all regulation courses of study and needs but "rule of thumb" information. We can hardly call his work research; receipt books and a fair selection of clearly-written practical handbooks will supply his needs, and if this selection be carefully made the "popular" reader who is reading in order to have a general idea of his subject may be satisfied also.

When we go further, and meet the higher student, the investigator, the inventor, we find ourselves on very different ground. It is no longer a question of supplying books as such, it is a matter of assisting research for details. We can no longer regard a subject as being adequately represented in our collection because we possess the best and most reliable modern treatises on that subject. The reader may wish to consult fifty books before the detail which he requires be found, and the information may finally be secured from a source which we should regard as neither modern nor best. Or, on the other hand, the point may be so recent in its origin that no text-book will help, and search must be made in periodical literature and transactions of societies. In fact, the whole of technical literature becomes one vast, undigested encyclopædia, no part of which can safely be discarded or ignored.

Having then a rough idea of the requirements of these varied readers, let us see how we can serve them best. We have at present two agencies, the public library of the municipality, and the reference libraries of special character open also to the public. These latter, however, I propose to designate "deposit" libraries, keeping the word "reference" as describing books, wherever placed, which may be consulted but cannot be borrowed.

So far as works can be considered as "educational" in the narrower sense of the word, their circulation should be in the hands of the municipal libraries; but it hardly seems fair to force the library funds to provide such books. In many parts of the country the education authority recognises that the provision of these text-books may at any rate be assisted from education funds, and this point should be pressed forward strongly. The work of keeping and circulating may be considered very fairly as that of the librarian, but the acquisition of such books, designated in official syllabuses, is an unfair tax on the library.

In the same way, copies of higher text-books and special collections connected with local industry, should be provided

from the technical education grant. Very little has been done towards forming these special collections, and where, as at Shoreditch, something substantial has been done, the provision of such a collection is a somewhat unfair tax on the local funds, because though Furniture is a staple industry of the locality, the workers are largely non-resident, and the trade serves London as a whole.

The municipal library cannot afford storage room for works which are seldom consulted; and its function must be, in the nature of things so far as technology is concerned, to keep available for lending or for current reference, such books and those only, which are in frequent request, keeping this collection up-to-date, weeding the stale books out, and "collecting" only on some specific industry which should preferably have a local interest.

The "deposit" library, such as that of the Patent Office for technology, the National Art Museum for art, St. Bride's for printing, or Shoreditch for furniture, has very different functions to perform. Here it is less a question of reading than of search.

The essential here is that all literature shall be stored and available for consultation, however rarely that consultation may take place. Thus, not only works which have served their time in the municipal library will be housed, but also those which would be used too little to justify their presence in the municipal library, such as works in foreign languages, and that immense mass of periodical literature to which I have referred. But, in order that reference may be complete, it is obvious that no lending can take place—in order that every fact may be always available, consultation can only take place in the library itself.

Thus, as the municipal library, by the nature of things, cannot keep a complete store of technical knowledge, so the "deposit," the so-called "reference" library cannot afford full facilities for the convenient consultation of the literature finally selected by the reader.

Here then, I think we can see that neither type of library is so efficient as it might be. Something is wanting, one other factor is necessary; that agency which shall provide any document for leisured use at home. Let us see then what aid the scheme described in the previous paper this evening will afford. The man who requires merely standard or average technical information would easily procure it at his municipal library. Knowing which book he needs the local librarian would supply it; from the central store, if no copy were available in the local collection. The reader using the existing "deposit" libraries,

THE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

CORRESPONDENCE CLASSES.

FOURTH SERIES.

The Education Committee have arranged for a fourth series of Correspondence Classes to be conducted during the Summer of 1907.

The undermentioned Classes will be conducted by the gentleman who acts as Lecturer in the same subjects at the London School of Economics, the sections being those of the Examination Syllabus of the Library Association. Ten lessons will be given in each subject.

Section V.—Library History, Foundation, and Equipment. Mr. Brown, commencing May 1st, 1907.

Section VI.—Library Routine (Practical Library Administration. Mr. Brown, commencing September 2nd, 1907.

The courses will consist of a selection of technical literature for reading, questions thereon, and various exercises on the principal subjects of the courses. Each paper will be corrected and commented upon by the teacher.

The courses will, as a rule, be restricted to students living outside the London County Council area; but the assistants living within the area who forward a certificate, signed by their chief, that they are unable to be present during the times that the classes are held at the London School of Economics, may also be admitted as students.

The fee for each course will be 10/-, payable in advance.

Students will be expected to provide themselves with the following text book. It is also advisable that the books of reference mentioned should be available.

Section V. & VI.—

TEXT-BOOK.

Brown (J. D.) Manual of Library Economy, 1907. Price 8/6 net.

REFERENCE BOOKS.

Brown (J. D.) Annotated Syllabus for the systematic study of Librarianship. Library Supply Co., 181, Queen Victoria Street, E.C. Price 1/- net.

Roebuck & Thorne. Primer of Library Practice for Junior Assistants. And as many works mentioned in the Annotated Syllabus as possible.

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Students should thoroughly understand that the gentlemen conducting the Lectures and Correspondence Classes do not profess to do all the work of preparing them for the examinations. Both Lectures and Classes are mean to stimulate and assist those who are willing to do their best ; but close and persevering private study on the lines of the Syllabus is indispensable to success at the examinations.

As it is not practicable to convey a knowledge of the History of Libraries by means of lectures, candidates are recommended to study this subject in the books dealing with it quoted in the list of text books in Syllabus.

All communications in connection with the Correspondence Classes should be addressed to the Honorary Secretary of the L. A. Education Committee, Whitcomb House, Whitcomb Street, London, W.C.

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from which he cannot borrow, could also obtain any documents which he needed for home use.

The institution of such proposed "central stores" will not greatly affect the work in "deposit" libraries, it will merely enable their readers to obtain on loan such works as they have hitherto been compelled to read within the library walls, that is to say, these great reference libraries will become more and more research rooms instead of reading rooms, and extension of their work is mainly to be looked for in that co-ordination and co-operation which must come as specialised collections are formed in various localities.

With the "municipal" library the case will be different. It is a good rule that no reader should leave a library if the information he desires be within the walls, and a good catalogue, plus a good librarian will ensure this, for he knows his books. Hitherto, the librarian has often been able to give trace of that which he does not possess, though this could hardly be considered part of his duty. But with the institution of a "central store" he will become one of the guides to books not in his possession, to which, however, he must give his readers a clue. A "central" catalogue will no doubt be necessary, but more will be required. As the mass of available books grows the guide to it must become more detailed, or else the number of possible books to borrow under any heading becomes so great that probably none are borrowed at all. It will then become necessary to place at the disposal of the public a far greater amount of bibliographical matter than is the case at present, the library which cannot let the reader see the books must provide him with adequate means of selection. Especially is this so in technology, where journal literature and transactions of societies play so important a part.

Thus I think that the provision of a "central" store will work entirely for good. It should give the reader all he needs. I hope it will tend to the formation of further "deposit" libraries in appropriate localities where books may be compared and consulted with a view to selection before borrowing. And, as regards ourselves, I am sure there is no danger of our becoming mere lending machines. By mere operation of necessity we should become more and more acquainted with bibliographies and sources, we shall be brought more than ever into touch with current progress and even though perhaps life may become a little more strenuous, we shall feel that the spread of knowledge is wider and our services more valuable to the nation.

[As regards local technical reference collections it is hardly a fact that the expense would be evened if they were provided

all round. They are only desirable in appropriate localities, and while nothing could be more appropriate than an open collection of expensive furniture works in the midst of 16,000 cabinetmakers, other localities have no staple industry at all, and many large industries, e.g., building, have no specific locality. The question of ways and means for the foundation of these local reference collections and the "central" stores was omitted designedly. Several solutions are possible, and the matter deserves separate and serious consideration. When the necessity for their provision is admitted greater weight will attach to any proposals made for their constitution.]

SURVEY OF THE MONTH.

By the HON. SECRETARY.

We were pleased to see the Chairman's remarks in the last number on the Pratt Institute Free Library report. It is impossible to over-emphasise the value of the American library report. Even if trivialities be sometimes chronicled in them they are still the best in the world. We have under our hand a beautifully illustrated report from Cleveland, and equally good reports are issued by Brooklyn, Pittsburgh, Detroit, the John Crerar, Chicago, and Grand Rapids, not to mention the sumptuous volumes issued by the Librarian of Congress. An American report is a far different thing from our average English library report, with its page and a half of remarks and its ten pages of statistics; it is a manual of current method with a strong personal note, and it makes interesting and valuable reading. Outside our own particular interests this month a meeting worthy of note was that of the Library Association on April 8th, when our friend Mr. H. V. Hopwood gave a demonstration on the "Classification Decimale" of the Institut International of Brussels. We wonder how many assistants have access to this remarkable expansion of Dewey. We understand that Mr. Dewey is preparing a translation. This system is furnished with symbols to mark dates, and minute relations and points of view, and, as it is being adopted by several influential bibliographies, something of its principles should be learned by all of us. Considering the weather and the rather distant position of the library the attendance at the Herne Hill Library was very satisfactory. Mr. Hopwood was much occupied that week, seeing that his paper on Dewey Expanded was read on the Monday and his capital causerie on "Technical Libraries" to us on Wednesday. Both our papers

were on co-operation, and the subject was handled extremely well in them and in the discussion. We were glad to hear Mr. R. A. Peddie's voice amongst us once more. The Library Association Examination is the keenest topic of current conversation. Each year has witnessed a rise in the number of passes, and we hope that two-thirds of the certificates will be gained by our members, as was the case last year. We should like with all deference to protest against the questions set in Section I. "The Working man in English Fiction" is almost puerile, and Oliver Wendell Holmes, charming as he is, is comparatively a minor author, certainly not one that library assistants should be compelled to grind at for examination. The other sections are fair enough.

There is not much need for comment on the appointments of the month; they have been few and unimportant. Batley, with its miserable pittance of £100 annually, has been awarded to Mr. Errington, Sub-librarian of South Shields, a gentleman with 15 years' experience. We cannot say that the salaries of librarians are yet even reasonable although there has been some improvement in recent years. The salaries of the last six appointments—averaging about £120—have been insults to the profession and to literature. Still, the public takes us at our own estimate, and each member of the craft should therefore lose no opportunity of urging the claims of his profession at all times, by improving himself personally, and by keeping an optimistic tone about in private or public conversation.

The Public Libraries Bill has been introduced into the House of Commons by Mr. Tennant. We fervently hope it may become law and supersede the antique Act that now fetters libraries; but we are dubious. The anti-municipalist campaign, sedulously engineered by the capitalist press, has blinded the common public—which at the best can see the length of its nose and no farther—to any claims of any institution managed by the community for the good of the community. The blindness is probably temporary, but we can hardly imagine a more inopportune time than the present for the introduction of our cherished Bill. We trust the exhibition of public selfishness and ignorance in the recent L.C.C. election may not be prophetic of the attitude of the public towards our Bill.

The prospects of the May meeting are very pleasant. A full announcement of the programme appears on another page; it should attract a large number of members and friends to witness the prowess of the cricketers. We do not often have an opportunity of getting so really out of London together, and we should have a record day. With regard to cricket, a match has been suggested between the Library Association and our

selves in the near future; the L.A. is sympathetic, and we hope it may become a *fait accompli*. The *Library Association Record* (March) contains two papers by members of the N.W. Branch of the L.A., the first by Messrs. McKnight and Savage on "How the Branch Associations may help the L.A.," criticising the conduct of the Association; the second by Mr. G. T. Shaw on the fruitful subject of "How to Improve the L.A. Record." Both are plentifully decorated with editorial remarks on the lack of information exhibited by the writers. *The Library World* (March) contains four papers, one by Mr. A. Kirby Gill on "Indicators," a brief comment on "Indexing Methods" by Mr. A. L. Clarke, a description of simple research methods by Mr. J. B. Thomson, and Mr. Bersay Pepcroy contributes a would-be funny article, very ponderous in style, on "Tramcars as Travelling Libraries." The April issue contains a much-needed paradigm by Miss Fairweather, of the passes in the L.A. Exams. since their commencement. *An Leabarlann* (March), the organ of the Irish Library Association, contains an interesting account of the examinations for Juniors held at the Dublin Public Libraries, and the really remarkable examination at the Limerick Public Library which resulted in the appointment of a man who knew Irish, but was not a librarian. *Library Work*, the American periodical bibliography of library economy, contains a reprint from our own pages of Mr. G. A. Stephen's instructive article on bookbinding, and capital synopses of recent library literature. The other American periodicals do not call for remark at present.

CORRESPONDENCE.

(To the Editor of the "Library Assistant.")

Junior Representation on Committee.

Sir,—As Hon. Sec. of the co-opted junior representation on the Committee of the L.A.A., may I inform members of the Association that Mr. H. Fostall (Bromley, Kent) is submitting himself as a candidate for election to the General Committee in June, in the interests of junior members. It is therefore hoped that Mr. Fostall will have the support not only of every junior member of the Association, but also of those senior members who recognise that the juniors are entitled to representation.

CHAS. E. THOMAS.

YORKSHIRE BRANCH.

APRIL MEETING.

The meeting of the Yorkshire Branch of the L.A.A., at the Leeds Institute on Thursday, April 18th, was undoubtedly the most successful yet held. Mr. G. W. Strother presided, and there was a capital attendance, members being present from Barnsley, Dewsbury, Hull, Leeds, Leeds Institute, Wakefield, and York.

Mr. J. Ross (York) read a paper on "Annotation," in which he said that the chief aim of annotation was to assist those who consulted the catalogue, by giving them a clear and accurate description of the scope and character of the books—the ground covered, the manner of treatment, and the standpoint from which the author wrote. It was a mistake to indulge in criticism of style or matter, or to attempt to assess the comparative value of different books on the same subject. The object of annotation was to guide readers, and this could not be done by criticism, but only by describing the contents of books.

Mr. G. W. Strother (Leeds) introduced the subject: "Research work in Public Libraries," and the discussions on the two papers were taken part in by Miss Harrison and Messrs. Slight, Owen, Smith, Ross, Ellison, and others.

Light refreshments were then partaken of, and the remainder of the evening was of a social character, an enjoyable musical programme having been arranged. Songs were contributed by Miss Greenwood, Mr. S. B. Ellison, Mr. W. C. Smith, Mr. G. W. Strother, Mr. E. Allison, Mr. W. E. Owen, and Mr. J. B. Ellison. Mr. Strother acted as accompanist.

A vote of thanks to the artistes, proposed by Mr. Townsend and seconded by Mr. Ross, brought to a close a most successful gathering.

J.B.E.

The next meeting will be held in June. Full particulars will appear later. Assistants in the district who have not yet become members are invited to communicate with Mr. Ellison (Hon. Sec.), at 2, Edinburgh Grove, Armley, Leeds.

NEW BOOKS.

Public Libraries: a treatise on their design, construction and fittings, with a chapter on the principles of planning, and a summary of the law. By AMIAN L. CHAMPNEYS, B.A., Architect. London: B. T. Batsford, 1907. Imp. 8vo. pp. xiii.—183. Price 12s. 6d. net.

With the rapid growth of the public library movement a new field has been opened up for architects, and it is highly desirable that those who devote themselves to this branch of architecture should thoroughly appreciate the requirements. In the past many librarians and architects have been brought into conflict by reason of the fact that each has viewed the question from a different standpoint—the librarian from the utilitarian and the architect from the æsthetic. Mr. Champneys recognises that both views are entitled to consideration, and it is a matter for congratulation that the first work entirely devoted to public library architecture has come from one so well qualified, and so sympathetic to the demands of librarians. Mr. Champneys deals most exhaustively with his subject, and shows an acquaintance with the inner working and administration of public libraries which is astonishing. Chapter I. is introductory and general, Chapter II. deals with materials and construction, and in the chapters which follow are discussed, in turn, installations and apparatus; shelving and accessories; fittings, furniture and appliances; book rooms; lending department; reading rooms; reference department; other public rooms and spaces; administrative accommodation; finance, organisation and building; principles of public library design; and single libraries and library systems. The author has anticipated that the order of treatment may occasion some surprise, but his reason is sufficiently good. "The whole design of a library building," he says, "must be the logical outcome of its administrative organisation, and therefore until the material with which this system has to deal is understood in detail, the conception of it as a whole must remain abstract and unconvincing. Consequently . . . the fittings are first described, then the various rooms and spaces which contain them, and finally the complete library is shown as a working organism. In other words, although it is not suggested that an architect should construct the fittings and then build a library round them, it is obvious that, unless he first knows what fittings each room is to contain, and what rooms there are to be, he cannot form an idea of the requirements of the library in its entirety. As the fittings are consequent on the dimensions of the human body, so the rooms are dependent on the fittings, and the complete building on the rooms." While realising that the more directly utilitarian requirements should take precedence, Mr. Champneys would not overlook the fact that the appearance of the building counts for much. "A building which is a work of art is in itself a powerful educational factor; a dignified structure commands respect for the work with which it is associated, while an attractive exterior and pleasing interior are great inducements towards the use of the building. . . . There is no doubt that the public behaves itself better in an attractive and well-equipped building than in a barrack, and that it is more likely to educate itself in rooms which look as if they were intended for such a purpose than in those which rather resemble a third class waiting-room at the railway station." The book is profusely illustrated with plans, elevations and interiors, library fittings and appliances, etc., the plans of complete buildings being reproduced to a uniform scale of 32 feet to 1 inch, thus rendering it easy to comprehend the comparative sizes of the libraries illustrated. There are also two useful appendices: (a) List of Acts of Parliament relating to Public Libraries, with summary of provisions, and (b) The Public Libraries Act, 1892, and Public Libraries Amendment Act, 1893. The work is, of course, primarily intended for architects, but we venture to think that to none will it render a greater service than to library committees and librarians.

Classification of library economy and office papers. By L. STANLEY JAST.
London: Library Supply Co. 1907. Price 2s. 6d. net.

Reprinted from Mr. James Duff Brown's "Subject Classification."
An index has been added, and the tables have been printed one column to a page, leaving space for modification.

LIBRARY PUBLICATIONS.

Library Magazines are to hand from Bromley (Kent), Finsbury, Nottingham and Pittsburgh. We have also received Part 8 (History and travel) of the Classified Catalogue of the Carnegie Library, Pittsburgh.

TESTIMONIAL TO MR. H. D. ROBERTS.

Library assistants will be glad to know that the Library Association is organising a testimonial to Mr. H. D. Roberts in recognition of his long and valuable services in connection with the educational work of that body, and with this object in view a circular has been issued, signed on behalf of the Association by Sir William H. Bailey, President, and Mr. J. Y. W. MacAlister, Vice-President. The work of Mr. Roberts is too well-known to assistants to need any emphasis here, but we hope that all who can will contribute to the fund. Contributions should be sent to Mrs. Reilly, 24 Whitcomb Street, W.C., without delay, as it is desired to complete arrangements at the May meeting of the Library Association.

THE COMMITTEE.

A meeting of the Committee was held at the Cripplegate Institute, E.C., on Wednesday evening, April 24th, Mr. W. Benson Thorne presiding.

A communication from Belfast, stating that an effort was being made to establish an Irish Branch of the L.A.A., was received with much satisfaction, and the hope was expressed that the efforts of those moving in the matter would be successful.

Mr. Hugh Smith was elected to be Vice-Chairman in place of Mr. Roebuck, resigned.

Other formal business was transacted.

NEW MEMBERS.

Senior: H. V. Hopwood, Patent Office Library.

Junior: Miss V. A. Aitken, Islington.

YORKSHIRE BRANCH.

Senior: F. J. Taylor, Barnsley.

Junior: Miss N. Berridge, Leeds; Miss C. L. Chaloner, Leeds; Miss L. A. Denison, Leeds; E. E. Howcroft, Leeds; T. R. Jackson, Dewsbury; Miss A. Scaife, Sheepscar Branch, Leeds; Miss A. Scott, Headingley Branch, Leeds; Miss A. Wallis, Chapel Allerton Branch, Leeds.

APPOINTMENTS.

WRIGHT, Mr. Thomas W., Assistant, Warrington, to be Senior Assistant, Bolton.

[The other selected candidates were Messrs. Curtis (Gloucester), Henderson (Liverpool), Matthews (Exeter), and Philpott (Limehouse).]

DIXON, Mr. Horace, Assistant, Kendal, to be Assistant, Erdington.

L.A.A. LIBRARY.

Desiderata.

(In continuation of the list printed in our January number.)

Rivista delle Biblioteche e Degli Archivi.

vols. 1 to 8.

vol. 9. Nos. 1 to 5.

vol. 11. „ 1, 4-6, 12.

vol. 12. „ 2-5, 8, 11, 12.

vol. 13. „ 5-9.

vol. 14 and 10. t.p. and index only.

vol. 15. Nos. 2-12.

vol. 16. „ 1-4, 6-7. (t.p. and index to all above vols.)

Bulletin du Bibliophile et du Bibliothécaire:

1905. Nos. 1-7, 10, 11.

Bulletin de l'Institut International de Bibliographie:

1re. année. all save fasc. 6.

2e „ „ „ 1-2.

3e „ all.

4e „ all save fasc. 1-2.

Revue Générale de Bibliographie Française:

tome 1. Dec., 1903.

„ 2. Nos. 10-12, 16.

Revue des Bibliothèques et Archives de Belgique:

vol. 1. pts. 1, 5 onwards.

Centralblatt für Bibliothekswesen:

13 Jahr. 1-6, 7-12 Heft.

14 „ 8-12 Heft.

Please address: Mr. A. H. Carter (Hon. Librarian, L.A.A. Library),
110 St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

ADDRESSES.

Chairman—Mr. W. Benson Thorne, Bromley Library, Poplar, E.

Hon. Treasurer—Mr. W. Geo. Chambers, Public Library, Plumstead
(Telephone—45 Woolwich).Hon. Librarian—Mr. A. H. Carter, St. Martin's Public Library, 110 St.
Martin's Lane, W.C.Hon. Secretary—Mr. W. C. Berwick Sayers, Central Library, Croydon
(Telephone—394 Croydon).*All communications relating to this journal should be
addressed to the Hon. Editor, Mr. HUGH SMITH, Bishopsgate
Institute, London, E.C.*